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1. KHRUSHCHEV'S PURGE OF THE PRESIDIUM



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An internal feud in the highest body of the Communist Party in the USSR has ended in the sharpest political purge since Stalin's death and a total victory for party chief Khrushchev and his supporters. Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich have been branded an "anti-party group" and ousted from the presidium--comparable to Stalin's politburo. D. T. Shepilov, although charged with less serious offenses, has been dropped as a candidate member of the presidium and as a party secretary. The name of Maxim Saburov, who was the USSR's top economic planner until last December, does not appear on any of the lists of the new presidium thus far made public, while Mikhail Pervukhin, another high-level economic specialist, has been demoted to a candidate membership.

Only six of the presidium's 11 full members survived a plenary session of the CPSU central committee which met for 10 days, from 20 to 29 June, and passed a resolution condemning the opposition faction. Nine new members have been added to create a new 15-member Khrushchev-packed presidium. Among them are former candidate members Marshal Zhukov, Mme. Yekaterina Furtseva, Leonid Brezhnev, Nikolai Shvernik, and Frol Kozlov. The remaining four have been brought in from outside the former presidium. The number of candidate members, of whom only one is a holdover from the pre-purge composition, has been increased from seven to nine. The entire presidium, counting both full and candidate members, thus now numbers 24 against a pre-purge 18.

The explanation given in the central committee resolution and a 3 July Pravda editorial for this dramatic change was that the effective functioning of the presidium demands that "the standard of discipline is the same for all members of the party, both the leaders and the rank-and-file." Malenkov and Molotov have been censured in the past, and it would seem that all three of the ousted members have kept up a stubborn resistance

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to Khrushchev policies and have refused to submit to the "persuasion" of their colleagues. It is less certain, however, that they can all be lumped together as "Stalinists," or that their opposition has had any common denominator. Khrushchev has apparently concluded that he is strong enough to eliminate such veteran Communists opposing him as Molotov and Kaganovich and may have included Malenkov as a rival young enough and powerful enough to challenge his leadership.

Khrushchev needed considerable power to bring off this move, and it can be assumed that, now that he has swept aside his opposition, he will be in a position to move ahead full speed in implementing his policies. But these events are not without drawbacks for him.

Despite the invocation of Leninist principles and a show of respect for the forms of party democracy, this development obviously reflects poorly on the much-vaunted "collective leadership." The reorganization constitutes a purge, although differing from the Stalin pattern in that none of those ousted probably need fear for their lives. The men who constituted the presidium at Stalin's death have thus proven that they cannot settle their differences easily or amicably. "Collective leadership," as a stable political formula capable of reconciling separate ambitions and policy views, has become a mere phrase. The display of strength and authority may well add to Khrushchev's prestige in the Communist world, but it is much less certain that it will contribute much to solution of the bloc's complex economic, social and ideological problems which came to the surface with Stalin's death, and to which the 20th Party Congress added.

Charges Against the Anti-party Group

The resolution charged that "the anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov--and Shepilov who joined them--which had formed within the presidium of the CPSU central committee" had consistently opposed party policies for the past three or four years, i. e., since Stalin's death in March 1953.

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The general charges against those ousted were as follows:

(a) They used anti-party, factional methods in an attempt to change the composition of the party's leading bodies.

(b) All three are specifically accused of opposing criticism of Stalin's "cult of the individual." They opposed the decisions of the 20th Party Congress, which "the entire Soviet people" supported. "The anti-party group turned a deaf ear to this creative movement of the masses." (This identifies them with the worst aspects of Stalinism.)

(c) They fought against rectifying distortions of the Leninist nationality policy (the rehabilitation of the minority peoples deported by Stalin during World War II).

(d) They opposed the policy of peaceful co-existence with countries of different social systems and the relations between the USSR and all peoples of the world (cultural exchanges, high-level visits, trade, and aid to underdeveloped countries).

(e) They opposed extension of the rights of the USSR's republics in economic and cultural development and fought legislation which would enhance the role of local soviets in fulfillment of these tasks. (This implies a broad charge of "Great Russian chauvinism" against the group.)

(f) They fought and tried to frustrate the reorganization of industrial management even after the Supreme Soviet approved the measure (a serious charge two days after this major change had gone into effect).

(g) They opposed agricultural policies which recognized the need for material incentives for the collective farm peasantry and for collective farm initiative in planning. They failed to see the possibility of abolishing compulsory deliveries from collective farmers' private plots (an obvious attempt to blacken Malenkov's name in the eyes of the peasants, who look back on his "New Course" with favor). They also

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opposed the recent Khrushchev proposal to overtake the US in per capita production of meat and dairy products (an accusation implying that they opposed a higher standard of living for the people).

(h) Molotov is specifically accused of opposing Khrushchev's virgin lands program.

Foreign Policy

In the sphere of foreign policy, Molotov was specifically castigated for opposition on the following points: reconciliation with Yugoslavia; conclusion of the Austrian Treaty; normalization of relations with Japan; possibility of preventing wars "in present conditions;" possibility of different ways to socialism in different countries; necessity for strengthening contacts between the CPSU and progressive parties abroad; and new steps in defense of peace and security of nations--in particular high-level contacts between Soviet leaders and other statesmen. He was supported "in many cases" by Kaganovich, and "in a number of cases" by Malenkov.

The Khrushchev coup confirms the existing lines of Soviet foreign policy. Those policies, laid down at the 20th Party Congress, will be maintained in the future because the locus of power now lies completely in the hands of those Soviet leaders who devised and most actively promoted those policies. The elimination of the Molotov "faction" also will be distinctly valuable to the Soviet government in its energetic efforts to restore the USSR's pre-Hungary posture of peaceful coexistence. Khrushchev probably will try to exploit this aspect in seeking new top-level meetings with Free World leaders as soon as he is able to consolidate his coup.

The resolution did not mention the disarmament question.

Effects in Eastern Europe and China

The central committee's condemnation of Molotov for opposing "the possibility of different ways of transition to socialism" will tend to stimulate unrest in Eastern Europe.

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Just as the resolutions of the 20th Party Congress, and particularly Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech, gave courage to the dissidents among the Satellite intelligentsia and within the Satellite parties, so too will these latest developments. The Satellite leaders, other than in Poland, have been faced in recent months with sporadic efforts by the intelligentsia to put forth views other than those prescribed by the orthodox hard-line leaderships. This has been particularly true in East Germany, and to a lesser degree in Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Bulgaria. So far, these orthodox regimes have been successful in keeping the lid on this form of dissidence. In view of the example of Hungary, it seems likely that they will continue to bend every effort to maintain this control, while at the same time paying lip-service to the Soviet central committee resolution, a policy similar to that which they followed after the 20th Party Congress.

The Gomulka regime will be able to use the very charges that have been spelled out against "the anti-party group" in the USSR against its own most dangerous adversary, the Stalinist Natolin faction in the Polish party. Extreme liberal elements in the Polish party, who have recently been reported as being more favorably inclined to the Gomulka program, probably will give him increasing support as they see his hand strengthened by the resolution.

The Yugoslavs undoubtedly will be pleased by the changes. The statements in the resolution which place the blame for the breakdown of the Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement on Molotov suggest that with him out of the way, the USSR may make new efforts to woo Tito. The basic ideological differences between Yugoslavia and the USSR, however, remain unresolved, just as they have been for the past two years since the Khrushchev pilgrimage to Belgrade.

Peiping will probably accept and publicize Moscow's version of the purge. The Kao Kang case in China in 1954-55 was also one of "anti-party factionalism," and Moscow at that time completely accepted the Chinese version, despite the many years of close relations between Kao and the Russians in Manchuria.

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The Chinese are very probably pleased that Molotov has been brought down. He has been identified with the inflexible policies in intra-bloc relations which Peiping strongly criticized in 1956. Peiping has not shown any favor for the other purged Soviet leaders. Peiping's favorite Soviet leader has seemed to be Khrushchev.

The New Presidium

The composition of the newly elected presidium exemplifies clearly the absolute predominance of Nikita Khrushchev. In addition to eliminating an alleged anti-party opposition group within the presidium, Khrushchev has succeeded in reducing the voice of government officials in the formulation of over-all Soviet policy, and has brought into the presidium nine new members, most of whom have enjoyed his patronage in the past. Khrushchev is thereby assured of almost unanimous support in any vestige of collective decision-making which may remain within the party's ruling body.

All members of the party secretariat (Khrushchev, Aristov, Belyayev, Brezhnev, Furtseva, Kuusinen, Suslov and Pospelov) are now members of the presidium. The secretariat, which conducts the day-to-day business of the party, will now participate directly in the formulation of the policies it is charged with implementing. Previously only Furtseva and Brezhnev were candidate members.

A sop to Soviet minority groups is evident in the inclusion of a representative of each major national minority area. In addition to Kirichenko and Mukhitdinov, who represent the Ukraine and central Asia respectively, the Baltic area is now represented by Latvian party boss Kalnberzin, the Belorussians by their republic first secretary, K. T. Mazurov, and the Transcaucasian minorities by Georgian party chief Mzhavanadze. The Ukraine received an additional bonus in the election of its chief of state Demyan Korotchenko. Otto Kuusinen, nominally from the Baltic area, was probably included as a sort of elder statesman representing Finnish minorities.

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Principal members of the central committee bureau for the RSFSR (Great Russian Republic), have also been elevated to presidium membership. They are Aristov, bureau deputy chairman Belyayev, Ignatov, Kozlov, Pospelov and Kirilenko. Furtseva and Koslov will represent the two major Soviet cities, Moscow and Leningrad.

The name of M. Z. Saburov, former Gosplan boss, was conspicuous by its absence from both the central committee resolution and membership of the new presidium. The newly appointed chief of Gosplan, I. I. Kuzmin, did not gain a seat on the presidium. His first deputy, Kosygin, however, was elected a candidate member.

Punishment of the Anti-party Group

The resolution warned that party members who refused to submit in the face of these events would be disciplined further and eventually expelled altogether from the ranks. But despite the reported "unanimous demands" of central committee members for the expulsion from the party of the anti-party group, the resolution did not go this far, possibly because the offenders admitted the charges "and committed themselves to complying with the party position." Instead the resolution concluded:

"1: To condemn as incompatible with the Leninist principles of our party the factional activities of the anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov, and of Shepilov who joined them;

"2: To exclude Comrades Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov from the membership of the presidium of the central committee, and from the central committee; and to remove Comrade Shepilov from the post of secretary of the central committee, and to exclude him from the alternate membership of the presidium of the central committee, and from the central committee."

The resolution was passed by "unanimous vote... with one abstention, in the person of Comrade Molotov."
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